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OCS - PERSONNEL (Professional qualifications for recruiting)

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[redacted] Chief, Technical Staff, OCS 3 May 1966  
Letter to Thomas McFee, Exec. Secretary, refuted statement  
made at a meeting of the KNOX PANEL to the effect that high  
school graduates were adequate to implement programs on  
sophisticated computers. [redacted] said

...In general, I have found that the system programmer trainees  
who have the best probability of moving rapidly into a full role  
on a complex system are those who have had a balanced selection  
~~of~~ of computer science courses from a good university.  
Others eventually may be as good, but the college-graduate  
trainee can move into a full role within one to six months,  
whereas the training of a high-school graduate requires a  
formidable and time-consuming management effort.

Computer-science trained programmers are versatile and can  
be given varied and fairly large independent assignments with  
little supervision. Most have ~~developed expertise of~~ at least  
~~developed~~ a minimum mathematics and physics background and  
thus can aid in scientific computational problems such as  
developing basic subroutines and interfaces.

The OCS has striven for professionalism and expects each  
person to be flexible enough to fill the requirements of the  
moment. Even though this ideal has not been fully reached  
so far, applicants with a university computer science background  
are receiving preference. For example, the two persons currently  
in pre-employment process for the OCS Technical Staff are Ph.D.  
candidates in Computing Science at major universities. Physics,  
mathematics, science, and engineering majors are next in  
preference.